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LRB100 11595 MST 22292 r

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Benjamin O. Davis Sr. was born on July 1, 1877 in Washington, D.C. to Louis Davis, a servant to General John A. Logan and Henrietta Davis; and

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WHEREAS, Benjamin Davis Sr. entered Howard University in 1897 and became a member of the black unity of the National Guard; and

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WHEREAS, On July 13, 1898, Benjamin Davis Sr. enlisted as a volunteer soldier in the 8th United States Volunteer Infantry during the Spanish-American War; and

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WHEREAS, On February 2, 1901, Benjamin Davis Sr. received a regular commission and was promoted to the rank of Second Lieutenant, serving with Troop M, 9th Calvary in the Philippines; and

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WHEREAS, In 1902, Benjamin Davis Sr. had two children, Olive and Benjamin Jr., with his wife, Elnora Dickerson, who passed away shortly after giving birth to their second child; and

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WHEREAS, Benjamin Davis Sr. was assigned to the Philippines as a supply officer of the 9th Calvary Camp Stotsenburg;

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1 shortly thereafter, he married Sadie Overton, an English
2 teacher at Wilberforce University; and

3 WHEREAS, Benjamin Davis Sr. became a professor of military
4 science and tactics at Wilberforce University, and later a
5 professor of military science and tactics at the Tuskegee
6 Institute; and

7 WHEREAS, In 1924, Benjamin Davis Sr. became an instructor
8 of the 372nd Infantry of the Ohio National Guard in Cleveland;
9 during the summers of 1930 to 1933, he traveled to Europe as
10 the official Army representative for the Pilgrimage of War
11 Mothers and Widows; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1938, Benjamin Davis Sr. was given his first
13 independent command, the 369th National Guard Infantry
14 Regiment; and

15 WHEREAS, On October 25, 1940, after 42 years of service in
16 the Army, Benjamin Davis Sr. became the first black American
17 General in the U.S. Army with a promotion to Brigadier General,
18 where he served as Brigade Commander at Fort Riley, Kansas with
19 the 2nd Cavalry Division; and

20 WHEREAS, Benjamin Davis Sr. was appointed to the Committee
21 on Negro Troop Policies, where he helped solve racial problems

1 within the military; and

2 WHEREAS, Benjamin Davis Sr. was awarded the Distinguished
3 Service Medal for combating segregation in the U.S. Armed
4 Forces; and

5 WHEREAS, Benjamin Davis Sr. served his country for 50
6 years, retiring in 1948; he passed away on November 26, 1970
7 and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery; and

8 WHEREAS, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 311 in Richton Park
9 was incorporated on August 2, 2002 and named in honor of
10 General Davis; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH GENERAL
12 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we honor the life and
13 legacy of General Benjamin O. Davis Sr. and declare August 2,
14 2017 as General Benjamin O. Davis Sr. Day in the State of
15 Illinois.